



feel this burning, love of mine by love-resistance

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feel this burning, love of mine

And it happened. I finally made an effort in writing and publishing something.

I came up with this idea, then came across Prompt #16 of prompts4all tumblr, and just had to put it down into words.

It's my first work in English, and I'm not an experienced writer.

A huge thanks to Byzinha, my long time friend and awesome writer. I need to say her stories are a big inspiration for me, I love the way she portrays our favorite characters. Thank you for encouraging me and taking your time to revise this.

Enjoy!

April, 1987

The last semester of sophomore year was stressing El out of her mind. How could the teachers have so many ideas of how to fuck you up with that amount of essays? She was sure she wouldn't survive the last period that day.

She had this love-hate relationship with Thursdays. If it had been a nice week, it felt like it was almost Friday, meaning that Saturday was closer than ever and she could spend the day with Mike and her friends. But if it was a bad week, Thursday meant one more day in her way to the weekend.

It hasn't been a nice week. After Spring Break, Mrs. Flynn came up with the brilliant idea they should partner up with a classmate until the end of the school year for a project in which they would have to write a review about the designated book *every. Fucking. Week.* It certainly didn't help that she got Lori Parsons, the laziest girl in school, to partner up with her, what meant she had to do the whole work by herself and caused her a sleepless night trying to finish the damn excerpt. She wished she had used her powers to pick up Max's name from the pot. She wished she could use them right now to make Lori choke on her own bubblegum.

At least she had made Mike promise her they were going to have ice

cream after class that day, because she was so tired and thought she deserved it for all the hard work she'd been doing. That was what she was looking forward and what prevented her from knocking her head on the desk. What in fact would be helpful, since she was already feeling dizzy and heavy headed.

The last period was finally over and she couldn't believe it when she finally made her way to her locker alongside Max complaining about her own project partner.

"Really, I don't know what else to do with Randy! He's just so obtuse! Do you believe he- El?" El was dragging her feet so slowly, she didn't even notice when she started walking with her eyes half-closed. She bumped into Max when she suddenly stopped, worried about her. "El, are you ok?" she nodded with a half-smile.

"Yeah, just really tired... You're not the only one with a dickhead of a partner," El rolled her eyes and Max nodded, understanding.

They reached their lockers and began tucking their stuff inside it carelessly. El's movements were really slow and she didn't notice that her burning eyes were closing again when a pair of arms embraced her from behind, causing her goosebumps.

"Hey," she found it weird that she couldn't smell his perfume, she could usually feel it when he was arriving. He turned her around and gave a quick peck on her lips, leaving them both smiling. "Missed me?" She began nodding in answer when she felt this sudden tingle beneath the bridge of her nose and she couldn't help the loud sneeze that followed, making sure it didn't go right into Mike's face.

"BLESS YOU!" Dustin shouted, and half the corridor was laughing.

"Thank you," El answered laughing a little too, but Mike wasn't laughing. He was looking intently at her face with scrunched eyebrows. His dark eyes were full of something she's seen lots of times, but didn't quite get it at the moment. His freckles looked like they might fall off his face and pour over her, and she didn't understand why the hell she was thinking that, but she also didn't care. His hands cupped her jaw, his long fingers touching her neck. She shivered and closed her heavy lidded eyes, lingering on his

touch.

"El, you're hot," she smiled at the statement.

"Hmm thanks, babe, you're not bad yourself."

"Oh, for fuck's sake, get a room!" she heard Lucas complain and their friends let out some ews.

"No, El, you're burning hot! Like, you got a fever! How are you feeling?" Mike continued testing her temperature with his own hand on her forehead. She looked at him and began connecting the dots of why she felt so out of it the whole morning.

"I-I don't know... Now that you said it, I feel a little dizzy, my eyes are burning, my head is exploding and my throat is a little scratchy, I think," she scrunched her eyebrows and matched his. "I thought it was because my lack of sleep last night."

"Well, of course it helped," he pursed his lips, rolling his eyeballs, clearly pissed off. "You should get some rest, let's go home," he took her hand and started walking towards the large doors at the end of the corridor. For a millisecond she followed his lead, stopping on her tracks when she remembered.

"But what about my ice cream?" Mike stared at her in disbelief.

"You gotta be kidding me. You are kidding, right?"

"But you promised!" El whined, pouting a little. He took a deep breath.

"Love, you are obviously sick. I don't think stuffing your face with ice cream is what you need. I'm taking you home, where you can rest."

Will suddenly approached them. In fact, they were all behind them all the time, but El just didn't notice at all.

"Yeah, but no one's home right now. I gotta go to work, mom is at the store and Hopper is out of town doing 'chief things' or whatever. The thing is, El would be alone until we got home."

"I'll be with her. I'll keep her company until you get home."

El missed Will's suspicious look, as she just listened the chitchat not paying attention, for her eyes began to close again while she leaned on Mike's side. He immediately embraced her shoulders and headed to the exit. Luckily, Mike had just gotten his driver's license the previous month, and his mother had lent him the car that day, since he told her they were all going to the ice cream shop after class.

"Get better, El!" Max said when she left on her skateboard with Lucas dragging his bike by her side.

"You take care of my sis, ok? No funny business, Wheeler." Even with her headache, El couldn't help but smile at Will's protectiveness while she got on the passenger's seat. She loved her new brother. "You can call me or my mom if anything happens."

"Okay, Byers." Mike rolled his eyes, but smiling at his best friend. Will hopped on his bike and went to his part time job at the local record shop.

Dustin got on the backseat of the car, as Mike started the engine. As Dustin's bike had broken down two days ago, he was more than happy to get a ride home.

"You look really bad, El."

"Thank you. I feel like shit." she stated in a husky and low voice. Her throat hurt. She was quiet for the rest of the ride, and the boys' small talked a bit. She almost didn't see Dustin getting off the car and waving them goodbye. Even half asleep, she felt Mike's eyes on her every two minutes or so. Soon enough, he pulled over her house's front yard, and she stumbled out of the car before Mike ran to catch her, helping with her heavy backpack.

"What do you carry inside this, anyway?" She didn't even mind answering that as they got in the house. She was embracing herself, shivering cold. "You should take a bath. I'll fill the tub."

Mike put her on the sofa and ran to the bathroom to prepare her bath. As the tub filled, he ran into the kitchen, looking for the first-

aid kit he knew Joyce kept inside one of the cupboards. After opening all of them, he eventually found it. Of course it would be in the last one. He looked for a thermometer and some antipyretic, checked the dipyrone expiration date and luckily it was recently added to the kit. He then left it on the kitchen table and ran back to the bathroom, where the tub was almost full. Back to the living room, he found El shrunk on the sofa, trembling. Mike was really trying to keep calm, but he was so fucking worried.

"C'mon, babe, let's take a bath." He called trying to pull her up. Surprisingly, she had a weak, mischievous half smile.

"Will you join me?" He shook his head in disbelief, but smiling, nevertheless.

"You're impossible, Hopper."

They dragged through the corridor, and El sat on the edge of the tub, pulling her hair up on a messy top knot. Mike helped her out of her white Keds, slowly unbuttoned her loose white shirt, which had a knot at the bottom. With her help, he nervously pulled out the baby blue tank top she had underneath. She got up and took off her jeans. Mike tried to keep it cool, but could not help the blush that crept on his cheeks at the sight of El only on her cute light pink striped underwear. It was not like he hadn't seen her like that before, but the Wheeler boy had the feeling he would never get used to it. She looked at him through half-lidded eyes, the fever giving her cheeks and plump lips a deep red tone. She then shuddered again and he got to his senses and back to his task. He closed the tap as she took off her bra and panties while he had his back to her. Embracing herself, covering her breasts, she got into the tub, quickly sitting down.

"Fuck, Mike, it's too cold!" He then turned to face her again, she was quivering hard.

"I'm sorry, love, it has to be this way to lower your body temperature. At least that's what my mom says," he finished with a questioning and doubtful look. It did work when he was sick, but he didn't like to inflict discomfort to El. "I'll get you a dipyrone. Be right back!"

Mike ran to the kitchen, getting a glass of water and the pill. It really

wasn't necessary to check her temperature before, the fever was pretty obvious. Back to the bathroom, he sat on the tub's edge facing El and gave her the medicine. She made a face, never too fond of pills, but took it without questioning. Taking the soap from her hands, he washed El's back very slowly.

"I wish I could breathe." Only then he noticed her nasal voice.

"Yeah, the flu got you hard this time. Maybe you shouldn't force your body to stay awake when you should be getting a nice sleep. It weakens your immune system."

"That's what you get when you're assigned with dumb bitch Lori Parsons to do an excerpt of *1984* and the moron tells you the day before she wouldn't be doing anything because she didn't fucking 'feel like it!'" El heavily tried to breathe. "I need to improve my grades in Literature, you know that."

"You should talk to Mrs. Flynn, then. She could re-assign you with someone better."

"Yeah, like that would happen." she rolled her eyes, regretting it as she felt the sting of pain.

"We'll figure it out. Now you have to rest. Wanna get out?" She nodded and he went to get her towel on the hanger. He helped her up, putting the large towel over her shoulders. She still quivered a bit, but she looked a little better already. Mike gently rubbed her face dry, as she smiled lovingly at him. He smiled back and pecked the tip of her little upturned nose. "Can you get dressed alone?" She nodded and finished drying herself, going to her bedroom.

Mike took the chance to make her something to eat, as he was starving too. Not really in the mood for her favorite Eggos, he ventured on the Corn Flakes box he'd catch sight earlier. He got two bowls and spoons, and a gallon of milk from the fridge. His girlfriend came in the kitchen wearing sweatpants and a large long sleeved striped shirt he was pretty sure once belonged in his wardrobe. Her hair was on a loose braid over her shoulder.

"Hungry? I thought we could have these cornflakes, but I can heat

you some Eggos, if you prefer." She shook her head while taking a seat.

"Cornflakes are okay," she looked up at him with her large brown eyes. "I would rather have that ice cream, anyway."

"Jesus Christ, El! You sound like a broken record!" he sounded a bit mad, but internally, he was fighting the smile, amused by her persistence on this fucking ice cream. Taking a seat by her side, he filled the bowls with the Corn Flakes, pouring a little bit of milk. She wasn't very cheerful about the meal, finding it hard to chew and breathe at the same time, as well as swallowing it through her sore throat. It didn't take too long for her to give up on eating the tasteless food.

"I want to go to bed," she stated, sighing.

Mike nodded and finished his bowl, leaving the dishes on the sink. Taking the thermometer he got earlier, they went to her bedroom. He pushed back the blankets from the bed, making room for her to lie down comfortably. She looked like a kitten crawling into bed and rolling under the blankets. He tucked it tightly around her, making her look like a giant burrito.

"Let's take your temperature," he said putting the thermometer in her mouth. He took a seat by her side on the edge of the bed and faced her while the minutes passed. He checked her bodyheat with his hands and, despite her rosy cheeks, she was apparently colder under his touch. She looked very tired, but kept a smile on her lips around the stick. He took it out, and indeed the fever had lowered, almost reaching a normal body temperature. Mike smiled at her, reassuring. "How do you feel?"

"My body is a bit sore," El yawned, "and sleepy."

He giggled and lied down beside her, putting his arm around her over the blankets.

"Mind if I stay here?" he asked and she shook her head, just the smallest of movements.

"You can stay..." El answered, closing her eyes already, "even though you're an idiot," she shot, fighting a side smile.

"Just because I didn't give you ice cream?" he rolled his eyes in disbelief.

"Yes."

"But you're sick!" she didn't have the strength to open her eyes.

"You're still an idiot, Wheeler," her stubbornness kept amusing him, he just grinned at her. Still hard to get air through her lungs, she sighed. "Thank you for taking care of me."

Mike gave a protective kiss on her forehead.

"I'll always take care of you, El. As long as you want me to."

"I will always want you to."

He hugged her tighter, as she comfortably fit in his arms, fast asleep.

By the next week, while El was still recovering from the flu, she forced Hopper to leave her at the Wheeler's, throwing her puppy eyes to convince her dad on letting her go check on her sick boyfriend. Of course he wouldn't be immune to that damn virus that was affecting half the school, as she got to know. Even if she still was a little weak, she climbed on his bed and hugged him tightly, facing his back.

"You shouldn't be here, you were getting better," Mike weakly complained, but smiled at her presence, feeling a sudden burning on his chest that had nothing to do with his fever.

"I'll take care of you, too," she stated, caressing his messy raven hair. "And you better get well soon."

He slowly turned around to face her. *How could he still look so cute?*

"Yeah?"

"Yeah," she smiled at his flushed face, "you still owe me that ice cream."